ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A data structure for representing program data that includes a number of streams. Each stream comprises a group of pictures (GOP) having a first picture and

5   remaining pictures. The data structure includes a first set of one or more elements for representing data for the first pictures in the GOPs, and a second set of one or more elements for representing data for the remaining pictures in the GOPs. At least one element in the first set represents data for the first picture of at least one respective GOP, with each such first picture having been encoded as a reference I picture. Each

10   remaining element (if any) in the first set represents data for the first picture of a respective remaining GOP, with each such remaining first picture having been encoded as either a difference picture or a P picture. Each element in the second set represents data for a particular remaining picture in one of the GOPs, with each such remaining picture having been encoded as either a P or B picture. Each stream is represented by

15   one or more elements in the first set and one or more elements in the second set.